KOINONIA

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The Power of Fellowship in the Body of Christ

by

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Koinonia

Can the Gospel speak to corruption, political conflict, social wounds, and personal struggles in today's Philippines?

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This eBook, Koinonia, is dedicated to the new generation who are called to be aware, responsible, and engaged in the issues of our society. It also honors those who continue to believe in the power of community, solidarity, and compassion. May this work inspire readers to seek truth, strengthen unity, and recognize God's presence as we journey together toward a more just and caring society.

Lastly, I dedicate this Ebook to my eudaimonia <3

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One

"The Truth shall prevail: The Rigorous investigation of the issue of Flood Control Project"

Malachi 3:19-20a (Sunday, November 16, 2025)

In today's generation, corruption does not only reside in the idea of controlling the mind by making manipulation in words and actions. It comes from the behavior that manifests through different perspectives and angles, and somehow this will be supported by the intention and will, actions will be motivated either by doing good or choosing evil. In the world we live in now, building projects are often seen as signs of growth and hope for the people. The Flood Control Project is one of these. Its goal is to keep communities safe from tragedies that happen repeatedly and destroy homes, businesses, and even lives. Underneath these good goals, though, there are sometimes claims of corruption, waste, and disregard for the earth. When stories come out of shady deals, low-quality products, or funds being misused, the goal of helping people is overshadowed by bad behavior. As voters, it hurts to see how a project that was supposed to protect people and property can turn into a place where greed grows. Because of this, we need to take a closer look at both the buildings that are being built and the moral principles that support them.

One of the most striking parts of the reading is that it comes from the book of Malachi 3:19-20a, which is, to be specific I wanted to mention because it really points out the context of corruption that is happening and the evildoers shall be put into suffering and consequences which will resonates of this statement "Lo, the day is coming, blazing like an

oven, when all the proud and all evildoers will be stubble… But for you who fear my name, there will arise the sun of justice with its healing rays. Hence, this text helps us remember that God's justice will win in the end. Lying, haughtiness, and cheating will not get people out of being responsible. The "sun of justice" is the truth, which shows wrongdoing that has been hidden and brings honesty back to human matters. When it comes to flood control, Malachi's lesson is clear: the truth will come out in the end, no matter how deep the cover-up goes. God's fairness requires people to be open, honest, and work for the good of everyone. Speaking of healing rays, the verse says that they are a sign of hope for communities that have been hurt by wrongdoing and neglect. When people in charge of the public good act out of fear of God and dedication to the truth, real mending will happen. It is not only political to investigate these kinds of projects, then; it is also a moral duty to make sure that human systems are in line with divine justice.

Humanitarian Inspection of the Flood Control featuring President Ferdinand Romualdez Marcos, Jr

As people, we can't just watch and judge; we have to do something. The See–Judge–Act way tells us to turn our thoughts into actions that are responsible. To start, we can encourage a culture of honesty in our communities by pushing for open government, backing

independent media, and being alert citizens who demand responsibility. In our daily lives, being fair means refusing to be apathetic and telling the truth even when it makes us feel bad. We are also asked to pray for our leaders, so that they may be led by the Holy Spirit and understand that it is their job to serve honestly. When Malachi calls, he doesn't just say bad things; he also says good things. *The "sun of justice" can only rise when each of us tells the truth and works to change things.* In the end, the strict probe into the Flood Control Project isn't just about finding wrongdoing; it's also about restoring society's morality. The truth will win out in the end, and our communities can find peace, healing, and fairness in its light.

Two

"Holding on in the Storm: Facing Painful Truths through Faith in the Santo Niño."

Mark 5: 21-43 (Tuesday of the Fourth week in Ordinary Time, February 3, 2026)

There are moments in my life when I feel caught in a storm when fear, uncertainty, and painful truths confront me all at once. In these moments, faith is not always easy. Yet, as a devotee of the Santo Niño, I am reminded that holding on to faith does not mean escaping pain but facing it with trust in Christ. This reflection is inspired by Cardinal Advincula's call for Catholics to confront painful truths and by the Gospel of Mark 5:21–43, which shows how faith can carry us through life's storms.

During the Feast of the Santo Niño, Cardinal Advincula urged the faithful to be open to painful truths that the Lord reveals to us. This message deeply struck me. Often, I want a faith that is comfortable—one that avoids difficult questions and hard realities. But the Santo Niño, though a child, points me toward a mature faith, one that grows through honesty, humility, and courage. To truly follow Christ means allowing Him to enter not only my joys but also my wounds, fears, and struggles.

This call becomes clearer in the Gospel of Mark 5:21–43. As I reflect on the woman suffering from hemorrhages and Jairus, I see my own experiences mirrored in theirs. The woman carried her pain for twelve long years. She was tired, wounded, and probably hopeless, yet she believed that even touching Jesus' cloak could heal her. I see in her my own silent struggles—the moments when I feel weak but still dare to hope. Her faith teaches me

that even when I feel unworthy or exhausted, I can still reach out to Jesus with trust.

Image taken by the Archdiocesan Office of Communications during the feast of Sto.Niño De Pandacan in Manila, Philippines.

Jairus' story also speaks deeply to me. As a father, he faced the painful truth of his daughter's illness and death. When all hope seemed lost, Jesus told him, "Do not be afraid; only believe." These words echo in my heart whenever I face situations beyond my control—loss, failure, or fear of the future. Like Jairus, I am invited to believe even when the storm feels overwhelming.

Holding on in the storm means trusting that Jesus is present, even when answers are delayed or unclear. The Santo Niño reminds me that God chose to enter human weakness. He did not come as a powerful king but as a vulnerable child. This gives me comfort. *If Christ embraced fragility from the beginning, then my own weakness is not something to hide but something I can offer to Him.* In the end, faith does not remove the storms of my life, but it changes how I face them. By confronting painful truths with faith in the Santo Niño, I learn to trust more deeply, love more sincerely, and hope more bravely. In every storm, I am reminded: I am not alone—Christ is with me, calling me to believe.

Three

"Tears and Cheers: Public Reactions to the ICC's Denial of Duterte's Interim Release in The Hague"

Liturgical Reading: Psalm 72: 1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17 (Sunday, November 30, 2025)

The International Criminal Court's rejection of former President Rodrigo Duterte's interim release has caused mixed feelings among Filipinos. On one hand, many fans showed anger, saying that the ICC's ruling was unfair and insulting to Philippine sovereignty. They viewed Duterte as a leader who protected the nation from the risks of illegal drugs and thought that foreign judges could not understand the country's unique problems. On the other hand, families of victims of illegal killings cheered, finding comfort in a long-awaited sense of justice. For them, the ICC's failure to free Duterte represents responsibility and acceptance of the pain they have experienced. This divide shows a country still badly hurt by the "war on drugs." The clashing feelings — tears of sorrow and cheers of relief—mirror a country torn between loyalty to a leader and the desire for justice. It is in this conflict that we, as Filipinos, are asked to think on the meaning of justice and peace as stated in Psalm 72: "O God, give your judgment to the king, your justice to the son of kings; that he may govern your people with justice and your afflicted ones with judgment."

Because we have faith, we need to think about both the law and moral aspects of this problem. According to Psalm 72, *a good leader must bring peace and justice, standing up for "the cause of the poor" and protecting "the children of the needy."* This means that justice is not about

getting back at people or getting political power but about protecting life and returning respect. People who back Duterte may be angry because they are afraid and faithful, but we must remember that no one is above the law, especially when it comes to fighting for human rights. The rejoicing of the families of the victims shouldn't be seen as a victory over others, but as a step toward healing and getting along with others again. According to the Psalm, God's justice "shall flower in his days, and profound peace, until the moon be no more." This shows that there can be no real peace without truth and justice working together.

Image of those families hearing the ICC Verdict against the case of Duterte's crimes againts humanity

As a citizen who seeks truth despite struggles in the human condition, we need to do more than just say what we think or feel. We are told to show kindness, look for the truth, and work for peace. To do this, we need to listen to both sides with understanding, pray for our split country to heal, and support changes that stop crimes from happening again. We can support human rights, push for openness in how the government works, and join groups that support restorative justice over revenge. We can hope that our leaders and ourselves live up

to the Psalm's words, "May his name be blessed forever; as long as the sun shines, so shall his name be." All the tribes of the world will be blessed through him. No matter how we feel about the ICC's decision, it should remind us *that justice is more than just the law. It's also a moral journey. It's a call to build a country where peace comes from telling the truth, being kind, and valuing every life.*

Four

"Faith in Motion: The Living Witness of the Traslacion"

Liturgical Reading: Mark 2:1-12 (Friday of the First week in Ordinary Time, January 16, 2026)

Mark 2:1-12 in the Gospel tells a strong story of faith, friendship, and healing from God. When Jesus got back to Capernaum, there was a crowd around Him that made it impossible for anyone to get into the house where He was speaking. Four men had a friend who was crippled with them and were determined to bring him to Jesus. Even though they couldn't get to Him through the door, they didn't give up. Instead, they climbed up on the roof, took off the tiles, and dropped the man in front of Jesus. Seeing how strong their faith was, Jesus first forgave the man's sins and then healed him. This showed that faith that is shared and lived out in action makes room for God's grace to change lives.

This section from the Gospel shows that faith is alive and shared with others. Faith isn't just accepting what God wants; it's actively seeking Him, which can be scary, take a long time, and involve working with others. The disabled man couldn't get to Jesus by himself; he needed the faith of his friends to help him. This shows that meetings with God often need the help of a group of believers. *Faith becomes real when shared with others. This is a lesson that is deeply felt in the Filipino dedication to the Traslacion of the Black Nazarene.*

Image :Translacion 2026

Millions of followers come to the Traslacion every year, even though it's hard to deal with the endless crowds and long hours. Yet, despite the problems, they keep going because they have hope, are devoted, and trust in Christ. Like the friends of the paralyzed man, the followers show a faith that moves—a faith that acts despite obstacles, a faith that brings people together, and a faith that wants health for himself and for the community as a whole. Walking in the parade is a physical representation of a spiritual truth: faith is not fixed; it is alive, strong, and able to bring about change.

In this way, the Traslacion is a living proof of the Gospel. It teaches that having real faith makes you do things. It encourages Christians to carry each other's responsibilities, keep going even when things get hard, and bring each other closer to Christ. Healing and spiritual renewal are not individual tasks, but group adventures. Devotion is a great example of this. It also makes everyone who is there and everyone who is just watching think about what faith is for: *it's supposed to bring us closer to God, make our love for each other stronger, and show the world kindness, hope, and renewal.*

Five

"A Lent of Listening and Gentle Words"

Liturgical Reading: Matthew 6:1–6, 16–18 (Ash Wednesday, February 18, 2026)

On Ash Wednesday, the Church gives us a powerful Gospel from Matthew 6:1–6, 16–18. Jesus teaches about prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. He warns His disciples not to perform good deeds just to be seen by others. Instead, He calls them to act in secret, where only the Father sees. This message is not only about external actions but about the condition of the heart. When we reflect on this passage, we often think about fasting from food. But fasting can also include our words. Words have power. They can heal, but they can also get deeply. A single harsh sentence can damage a relationship. Gossip can destroy reputations. Sarcasm and insults can silently break someone's spirit. Sometimes, the wounds caused by words last longer than physical pain.

Jesus says, "When you pray, go to your inner room." This inner room is not only a physical place; it is the silence of the heart. In silence, we become aware of our thoughts and intentions. Many hurtful words come from pride, anger, or the desire to prove ourselves right. When we pray sincerely, God reveals these hidden motives. *True prayer changes how we speak because it changes how we see others.* The Gospel also warns against hypocrisy. It is possible to appear religious while speaking unkindly. A person may fast strict, attend Mass regularly, and give donations—but still speak with bitterness. This is a contradiction. If our fasting does not make us more patient and gentler, then we have missed the point. Real conversion must touch our tongue.

Image of Pope Leo at his papal audience

In his Lenten message, Pope Leo XIV invites the faithful to "disarm" their language. This means choosing words that build peace instead of conflict. *In a world full of online arguments, political tension, and personal misunderstandings, many people speak quickly and harshly. We react instead of reflecting.* We judge instead of listening. The Pope reminds us that listening is also part of conversion. When we truly listen, we are less likely to hurt others with careless speech. Fasting from hurtful words can be a powerful Lenten sacrifice. It means pausing before speaking. It means refusing to gossip. It means correcting someone with charity instead of humiliation. It means asking forgiveness when we fail. This kind of fasting is hidden, but "the father who sees in secret" sees it.

Ash Wednesday reminds us that we are dust. We are weak and imperfect. Knowing this should make us humble and compassionate. If we also need mercy, then we must give mercy in our words. This Lent, may our prayer purify our hearts, our fasting discipline our desires, and our words reflect Christ's gentleness. Let us not only give up food but also give up words that harm. In doing so, we become true witnesses of God's love—quietly, sincerely, and from the heart.

About the Author

Sanguine and Outgoing person